GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2625
ANSWERED ON:10.05.2016
Food Wastage
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge quantity of wheat equivalent to the entire annual production of Australia goes to waste each year in India, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
(b) whether the Government has made any study on food wastage in the country, if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
(c) whether the Government is considering to ban supermarkets, hotels and food plazas from wasting or destroying unsold food by forcing them to donate it to charities and food banks;
(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard; and
(e) the other steps taken by the Government to curb food wastage in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)
(a): No Madam,
According to a study conducted by Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) during 2012-14 on "Assessment of quantitative harvest and post-harvest losses of major crops and commodities in India" in case of wheat overall total loss at the national level is estimated at 4.93% which includes harvesting, thrashing, transportation, storage at farm & wholesaler level etc.
Foodgrains including wheat procured by the Government under Central Pool are stored in scientific manner in covered godowns and CAP (cover & plinth). Scientific codes of storage practices are followed to avoid losses. Inspite of all precautions some quantity may get damaged/become non-issuable during storage due to various reasons, such as, storage pests' attack, leakages in godowns, procurement of poor quality stocks, exposure to rains, floods, negligence on the part of concerned persons in taking precautionary measures etc.
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The trend of accrual of damaged/non-issuable wheat during last three years in Food Corporation of India godowns is as under:

Year	Quantity accrued as damaged (in lakh tons)	% damaged wheat against Off-take quantity
2013-14	0.13	0.05
2014-15	0.07	0.03
2015-16	0.01	0.004

(b),(c),(d)&(e): A Committee on "Containment of wastage of food and ostentatious behavior during social gatherings (Marriage/Parties/Meetings etc)" under the Chairmanship of Secretary of the Department of Consumer Affairs was set up by Government on 30.05.2011. The validity of the Committee expired on 31.03.2014. On the instruction of the Committee, the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) conducted a survey on wastage. A copy of the report containing recommendations was sent to all the Union Ministries/Departments, States/UTs for necessary action on the advices contained therein. The recommendations in the report inter-alia include major focus on education & awareness, pro-active role of both print & electronic media highlighting simple social functions, involvement of youth in various events to raise awareness of food wastage, involvement of Consumer Clubs/NSS/NCC/Nehru Yuva Kendra etc. in the campaign, involvement of hospitality industry(Food Service Sector) to contribute in minimizing food wastage besides, observance of austerity by Government Departments and Public Sector Organizations while organizing social events.
Government has taken various steps to curb the food wastage based on the recommendations of the Committee which are as under:
1) An awareness campaign through Audio/Visual Publicity on the lines of "Jago Grahak Jago" was included as a part of the scheme for sensitizing the general public on the issue.
2) An awareness campaign through the consumer clubs in Schools and Colleges has been promoted with the help of State Governments/UT Administrations under the Scheme of consumer clubs.
3) The State Governments/UTs have been advised by the Department of Consumer Affairs to create awareness on wastage of foodgrains and ostentatious behavior witnessed especially during social gatherings such as marriages/parties/functions and to contain them so as to sensitize the student community on the issue, predominantly using the local/regional languages besides English and Hindi.
4) The National Curriculum Framework developed by NCERT includes "Food" as one among six common themes of the syllabus of

"Environmental Studies" of Class III to V and in "Science" subject from Class VI to X. The contents related to "Wastage of Food" have been included in the syllabus on Health & Physical Education as a compulsory subject upto Secondary stage (Class XI-XII), to avoid wastage of food.

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